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Hush-Hush Stamps

IF JOHN McCONE steps down as head of the Central Intelligence Agency, we nominate Macon Postmaster Lloyd Ricks to replace him.

Mr. Ricks, as well as other postmasters over the country, proved he could keep a secret and work in a hush-hush atmosphere in a project involving orbit stamps.

Last June, three U. S. government agencies—the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Post Office Department and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing—started planning to issue a stamp commemorating this nation's first orbital flight.

A designer, supposed to be on va-

cation, was actually working on his drawing board at home. Engravers were smuggled into the big engraving plant in Washington on week-ends. Special messengers shuttled between departments. A press room was sealed off and former employees did the work. The printed stamps were sent in sealed packages to 300 post offices over America.

The result: only a few minutes after John Glenn stepped from the Mercury capsule to the deck of the Goa, 100 million of the new stamps were on sale. Lines formed at post offices. In Macon and in other cities people rushed to obtain one of the stamps in this historical issue.